Gothic Genre and *Edward Scissorhands*

Listen and take notes as I present about Gothic Literature and then decide which elements of the Gothic genre appear in *Edward Scissorhands*.

Once you have ticked them, describe which scene they are in, using the table below:

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| Elements of Gothic Literature | In Film? | Description of element in *Edward Scissorhands* |
| Gothic setting | √ | Edward’s mansion-disrepair, black & grey; garden is the exception |
| Mist/fog | √ | Smoke from machinery, particularly in the opening scenes |
| Humans are in conflict over the good and evil in themselves | √ | Kim has to make a choice between Edward & Jim. She also has to choose whether to lie about Jim’s death to save Edward or do the ‘right’ thing and tell the truth; Peg also has to decide what to do with ES once the neighbours start to turn on him; ES (part-human) has to choose Kim’s love or her safety and ultimately decides upon her safety |
| Innocent heroine, pursued by monster | √ | ES loves Kim, but Jim already has her; ES doesn’t pursue her aggressively (as Jim does), but he does want her to love him back |
| Forbidden knowledge/power | √ | ES’ inventor has created ES, accessing forbidden knowledge about creation of life, which goes against the governing principles of heaven and earth around which Gothic lit works |
| Monster/Fallen Hero/Wanderer | √ | ES is not a typical fallen hero, as he is all good, but he is also doomed by the sins of his creator and forced to live in isolation forever |
| Spiral narrative | √ | Grandmother starts story, then Peg’s point of view takes over, then it’s book-ended with the grandmother revealing herself to be Kim. |
| Dreams/visions | √ | ES’ flashbacks of his creation |
| Signs/omens | √ | Esmeralda is a parody of the usual character who warns about impending evil |
| Ancestral curse | √ | ES cursed to eternity in isolation because of the sins of his ‘father’ |
| Entrapment/imprisonment | √ | ES can’t leave mansion once he has fled there and Kim can’t visit, despite living so close to each other for the rest of Kim’s life. His safety-net is also his prison |
| Gothic gadgets | √ | Scissors? |

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| Gothic counterfeit | X |  |
| Mystery | X |  |
| Comedy precluding tragedy | √ | * ES’ drunken-state and the misunderstanding about lemonade * Jim’s comments about giving his left nut to see ES electrocute himself again and “forget holding hands; think what those scissors could do to other places” |
| Necromancy | X |  |
| Body-Snatching | X |  |
| Revenge | √ | Jim tries to kill ES for ‘taking’ Kim away from him |
| Sleep-walking | X |  |
| Superstition | √ | Esmeralda-holding crosses and rosary beads to ward off evil-again, satirised, not taken seriously |
| Transformation | √ | Kim’s revelation that she’s the grandmother, but this is not a typical Gothic transformation, with the likes of Dracula and Jekyll & Hyde |
| Incarnation of evil | √ | Jim-irony as he looks harmless, like the all-American hero, whereas ES looks like the monster, but is ‘uncommonly gentle’ |
| Supernatural beings | √ | ES-Part-machine, part-human? |
| Protagonist is pursued; hero-villain | √ | Both Kim and ES are pursued by different people at different times-Jim, the neighbourhood mob, Joyce |
| Unreliable narrator | V | To some extent-not in the classic sense of Poe’s *Tell-tale Heart*, for example, but the audience doesn’t know that the old lady is Kim until the end of the film |
| Revenant | X |  |